



Montgomery County *Commission for Women*

Montgomery County Women's History Archive:

Valerie Ervin

Women of Historical Significance in Montgomery County



Ms. Valerie Ervin began her career in grass roots activism as a union organizer, fighting to ensure that working parents knew their rights in the workplace and that they received appropriate benefits.

Elected to the Montgomery County Board of Education in 2004, Ms. Ervin served as chairperson of the Research and Evaluation Committee, developing solutions to a variety of issues that impacted the lives of students and their families. She also served as NAACP Parents' Council representative and was a founding member of Blacks United for Excellence in Education.

Elected to the Montgomery County Council in 2006, Ms. Ervin is the first African American woman to serve on the Montgomery County Council, and was elected Council President in 2011.

As a Councilmember, her legislative agenda included making changes that promote the interests of working families. She was the lead sponsor of the County's Prevailing Wage Law, requiring contractors and subcontractors to pay prevailing wages to workers on county construction projects. Councilmember Ervin worked to dismantle barriers to high-quality child care by promoting better access to child care subsidies for families.

She resigned from the County Council in January 2014 after nearly a decade as an elected official in Montgomery County. She left to take the post of Executive Director of the Center for Working Families, a non-profit organization whose stated purpose is to seek a more just world, with jobs that pay a living wage, affordable healthcare, secure retirements and accessible quality educational opportunities.

Ervin has received many awards for her public service including: Washingtonian Magazine's Most Powerful Women Award in 2011; Maryland's Top 100 Women from the Daily Record in 2008 and 2012; Long Branch Athletic Association's Community Hero Award in 2010; Phylliss Campbell Newsome Public Policy Leadership Award from

the Center for Non-Profit Advancement in 2008; John Greeley Award from Liberty's Promise in 2008; and the Phenomenal Woman of the Year Award from Community Bridges in 2007.

Governor O'Malley named Ervin to the Chesapeake Bay Trust, which is a non-profit, grant-making organization created to promote public awareness and participation in the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. She received a 2008-2009 Rawlings Fellowship from the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership at the University of Maryland.